

22. A FEW MOMENTS WITH AN EGG LAYING
ISTIBLENNIUS STRIATOMACULATUS

On January 3, 1980, we were on a field trip as a part of our study programme on the rock-pool ecosystems off Visakhapatnam. While making observations, we were glad to see a ripe female of *Istiblennius striatomaculatus* (Kner 1866) in the process of laying eggs in an empty barnacle, shell at the top of a rock outcropping of a tidepool. It was 3.40 P.M., and the sea had receded exposing the upper one metre of the triangular outcropping rock which was almost dry. The lone fish leaped on to the surface of the steep rock from the water level. Aided by the pelvic fins in holding the rock surface, it started then to climb up by wriggling movements and wagging its tail. After reaching the apex of the rock, it entered an empty barnacle shell containing a little sea water; there it settled with its head protruding. All this it did with much ease and agility, as if it had previous experience of visiting the same spot. Then it began laying eggs. While it was laying eggs no major body con-

volutions were observed, but for slight movements, probably to spread the eggs, evenly. It remained laying eggs for 4½ minutes and all the time the fish relied on aerial breathing aided by a few gulps of sea water from the barnacle shell. The fish then came out of the barnacle shell and jumped back into the water. After an interval of 12 minutes, it returned to its breeding nest, in the same way as it did before and remained there for 3 minutes. By 4.20 P.M. the tide was rising and we had to leave the place collecting a sample of the eggs. The eggs were dome shaped, attached to floor by sticky disc and measured 0.5-0.6 mm in horizontal axis and 0.4-0.5 mm in vertical axis. The egg was more or less transparent containing an yellow oil globule.

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23. EEL FISHING WITH BRUSH HIDEOUT

From ancient times fishermen of Nepal have developed many and varied fishing tactics to suit local exigencies. One fishing method that deserves special mention could be called the "Brush hideout for eels". This method of fishing is based on the fact that eels frequent

weedy lakes and boggy banks of rivers and hide among weeds, and in holes, crevices in the shallows of the lake or river bank during day time. This habit is utilized by experienced fishermen to catch the spiny eels (*Macrognathus aculeatum*, *M. pancalus*). This method is